(c) if not, the reason therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (c) No Sir. In accordance with Article 341(1) of the Constitution, the lists of Scheduled Castes are State specific. However, all Scheduled Castes irrespective of the State of origin are eligible, in regard to appointments in Central Government services.

Destitute female children

2121. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that lakhs of female children are now roaming in urban areas without a place to stay and without guardians;

(b) whether it is a fact that such girls are loitering around railway stations and public places without any help or protection;

(c) whether Government have any scheme or plan to attend to this dire social requirement of the society;

(d) Government's plan to find and take care of girls without any guardians in the cities;

(e) whether any hotline has been established to encourage information on such destitute girls in the cities; and

(f) the details of such plans by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) Government are aware of the problem of street children including female children in urban areas.

(c) to (f) The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is implementing a scheme 'An Integrated Programme for Street Children' which aims at prevention of destitution and withdrawal of children from a life on the street

and their placement into national mainstream. A child helpline, *viz.,* Childline is also being assisted under the said scheme. Childline is a 24-hour free toll service and any child in distress or any adult on his/her behalf can dial 1098 to obtain assistance for immediate relief and restoration to family or referral to Institutions for long-term care. This service is at present available in 61 cities.

The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000 provides for establishment of children homes for children in need of care and protection by the State Government itself or in association with voluntary organizations. Such homes for girls have been set up in Bangalore, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad and Mumbai.

The Department of Women and Child Development under the Ministry of Human Resource Development is also implementing the 'SWADHAR' scheme, which addresses the specific vulnerability of each of group of women in difficult circumstances through a Home-based holistic and integrated approach.

Social security programme for senior citizens

†2122. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether any social security programme for the senior citizens has been worked out;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are contemplating to frame any law in this regard;

(d) if so, by when the same is likely to be finalized; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN):

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.